

News Release
U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
District of Rhode Island

June 16, 2005



Central Falls man admits firearms violation

Daniel Shepard, of Central Falls, has pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm in Providence last November. Shepard pleaded guilty as he was about to go on trial in connection with an alleged carjacking.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the guilty plea, which Shepard entered on June 13 before U.S. District Court Judge William E. Smith in U.S. District Court, Providence. Shepard is detained pending sentencing, which is scheduled for September 2.

At the plea hearing, Assistant U.S. Attorney Adi Goldstein said that, had the case gone to trial, the government would have proven that, on November 9, 2004, Shepard had a handgun in his pocket when Providence Police officers Angelo A'Vant and Fabio Zuena confronted him in front of 200 Gordon Street. When Shepard refused to show his hands, the officers drew their weapons. He then pulled out the gun and tossed it into a car. Officers arrested Shepard and seized the gun, a .380 caliber pistol.

Shepard, 27, of 126 Sumner Street, Central Falls, has several prior felony convictions, including attempted larceny, possession of a stolen motor vehicle, and drug possession. The statutory maximum penalty for being a felon in possession of a firearm is ten years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine.

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The guilty plea was not the result of a formal plea agreement and the government made no promises as to a sentencing recommendation. Before Shepard entered the plea, Judge Smith, at the government's request, dismissed two other charges against him: that he seized a car at gunpoint on November 9 and that he fired a gun in the process, wounding his victim. The government will argue that the alleged carjacking and shooting be considered as factors in Shepard's sentence for the firearms offense. The government can also seek reinstatement of the carjacking charges.

A state District Court complaint brought by Woonsocket Police is pending against Shepard, alleging first degree carjacking and firearms offenses

Providence Police, Woonsocket Police, North Smithfield Police, and the **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives** investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Goldstein and Craig N. Moore are prosecuting the case as part of **Project Safe Neighborhoods**, a Department of Justice initiative against gun crimes. Under Project Safe Neighborhoods, the U.S. Attorney's Office, working with Providence Police, ATF, the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, and other agencies, aggressively prosecutes federal firearms offenses in an effort to incarcerate those responsible for gun violence and deter others from committing gun crimes. Since 2001, federal firearms prosecutions in Rhode Island have more than doubled and gun offenders have been sentenced to a total of more than 600 years in federal prison.

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Contact: 401-709-5032

thomas.connell@usdoj.gov